

Please revoke the exemption for digital wireless telephones to be compatible with hearing aids. To do so is to rightfully include people of all ages with hearing aids as well as the huge senior population with hearing aids who are adversely affected by the exemption. As a professional (until 2000) I was further limited because I could not find a compatible digital wireless telephone to facilitate my work.

=09Now I belong to the latter group, seniors wearing hearing aids. I wear Multifocus digital hearing aids behind both ears. I still need a wireless digital telephone for emergency purposes since I travel frequently and cannot hear on public telephones. The California and Washington AAA auto insurance companies have offered wireless telephones for us members, but in both states the 800 number agent knew nothing about compatibility with hearing aids and could not address my needs. AAA also offers no demo opportunities in their offices. They only sell them over the phone (and then we can find out if they work or not with hearing aids.)

=09I have been to many stores to try out digital wireless telephones. Without fail the sales personnel have no experience nor information about compatibility of their product and hearing aids. They cannot carry on a conversation about the subject let alone answer my questions about compatibility.

=09 Nokia was the only place where someone could speak intelligently about the subject. Apparently I would have to connect a FM neck loop to the Nokia wireless telephone and switch to the telecoil in my hearing aids to use the "compatible" Nokia telephone. However, I can't tell if/when a call is coming in (can't hear the ring) and to "hook up" to the Nokia would require immediate attention (dangerous if I'm driving my car). Further, driving "hooked up" to the phone, would isolate me because hearing aid telecoil use blocks out all environmental sounds, including human voices. If this time-consuming, complicated and frustrating process is "compatibility" with digital wireless telephones, then compatibility needs redefinition! And in my search, the Nokia is all that I've found that is "compatible."

=09Other digital wireless telephones didn't have even that option. I could not hear on any of them either due to the buzzing interference in the receiver or the inadequate volume in the handset. In addition, I could not hear the ringer to know a call was coming in.

=09In summary, I am among many people with hearing impairment who use hearing aids, but who do not have access to digital wireless telephones. Lack of access puts us at a distinct disadvantage as travelers and as people who need to connect with and use such a device for safety and emergencies. We still are social beings and oral communication is our common medium. People with hearing loss who use hearing aids should not be denied access to digital wireless telephones.

=09Finally, I believe my civil rights are being violated because I am a person with a disability and as a group of people with disabilities, we are denied access to the use of digital wireless telephones. Once again I ask that the FCC revoke the exemption for digital wireless telephone to be compatible with hearing aids.

Thank you.

Charlene MacKenzie

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